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R 210749Z DEC 06 ZFR
FM AMEMBASSY YEREVAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4612
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 YEREVAN 001745

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SECSTATE FOR EUR/CARC, EUR/PPD, DRL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/18/2011
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [AM](#) [KDEM](#) [KPAO](#)
SUBJECT: POLITICAL BLOOD SPORT GOES COLLEGIATE

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PER DRAFTER, PLEASE ZFR (CANCEL) ALL SECTIONS OF
YEREVAN 01745 DTG 210749Z DEC 06. THIS WILL BE SENT
UNDER A NEW MRN.

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was no
quorum when the Academy Board met on February 28, 2006
(during this
meeting they decided to change the composition of the Board
to add two
representatives - one from France and one from Germany), in
violation of
article 24 of the Law on Foundation, with states that
foundation board
meetings are valid only if there is a quorum. The Court also
declared the
decision of the Board to name a new Rector also null and void
given that
the new Board composition was null and void. In effect, the
Court has
suspended the Board's and Rector's abilities to function.

15. (U) Artur Baghdasarian also launched and still chairs the
French
University in Armenia, which partners with Lyon-3 University
in France.
However, the French University's rector and vice rector
positions are held
by French-national administrators, making the French
University a more
sensitive political target for the government. (COMMENT:
Taking on the
French University would have more sensitive political and
foreign policy
reverberations, perhaps seen as a poke in the eye toward
France itself,
and unthinkable during the "Year of Armenia in France." END
COMMENT)

EUROPEAN ACADEMY BACKGROUND

¶6. (U) The European Academy Fund was established in October 2001 according to article number 123 of the Armenian civil code and by government resolution number 978, which was adopted on the basis of agreement between GOAM and Italian, French, German and Austrian governments. According to the same official documents, the Ministry of Education provided classroom and administrative facilities to the newly established Academy. President Kocharian presided over the academy's grand opening a year later, to much fanfare, with the assembled diplomatic corps looking on.

¶7. (U) Currently the Academy has 1,406 students and signed cooperative agreements with approximately twenty European organizations, the most important partner being the European Union, which has provided more than 1.2 million euro in technical assistance. The Academy has also established a unique partnership with the University of Nebraska and Lakeland College, which provides a joint (distance-learning) masters degree in education administration and business administration respectively.

¶8. (C) COMMENT: While the Ministry of Education may have a legitimate point about needing to contain the proliferation of different, new degree-giving institutions which may be diluting the field and overselling the value of their degrees to their students, such an initiative would never have come from the President's Chief of Staff. Instead, it is likely that this idea was generated by Yeritsian, the President's education advisor, as political payback to the former Speaker following his party's departure from government. Although this could be an unusually thorough preemptive measure, designed to deny Baghdasarian even so meager a political pulpit as the European Academy, it is more likely is

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that this episode is just petty grudge-settling; part of the ritual stripping of the perks and accoutrements of power from the prodigal son and a reminder to other regime allies the political costs of falling out with the President. END COMMENT

GODFREY